

Amendments to the Specification

Please replace paragraph [0073] with the following amended paragraph:

[0073] In the insertion mode, once a POH byte for a given path is inserted the next POH byte for that path is requested at the next earliest opportunity (in the next timeslot for that path) on the overhead interface request stream. As previously, eight, nine, or ten POH bytes may be requested for insertion per path per frame, depending on pointer justifications. POH bytes for a given path are requested in the order that they are to be transmitted. ~~The~~ The external device responding to the request provides the POH bytes on the data stream in direct response to the request. It never provides unsolicited information. The external device can choose to ignore a request thus allowing the data on the SONET/SDH stream to pass through the POHP-U unmodified. A minimum interface rate is determined that allows the requested POH bytes to arrive from the external device on that data stream "just in time" to be inserted in the SONET/SDH stream.